

**- The Veterans Guaranteed Bonus Act Passes House Unanimously -**

*Washington, DC* - U.S. Rep. John Hall (D-NY19) voted this week to pass legislation that will ensure that members of the Armed Forces who are discharged as a result of combat-related wounds receive the full compensation to which they are entitled by the Department of Defense. H.R. 3793, the Veterans Guaranteed Bonus Act, passed the House by a unanimous vote of 405 to 0. The measure passed the Senate last week.

Earlier this year, the bipartisan Commission on Care for America's Returning Wounded Warriors, co-chaired by former Senator Bob Dole and former Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala, uncovered a Department of Defense rule that unfairly penalized wounded soldiers by prohibiting them from receiving their full enlistment bonuses. Subsequent news reports surfaced nationwide that the military was demanding that wounded service men and women repay their bonuses because they were unable to complete their entire military obligations.

"It is ridiculous that injured members of the Armed Forces would be asked to repay their enlistment bonuses," said Hall. "This legislation will rightly ensure that all combat-wounded soldiers not only keep the bonuses paid to them, but are also paid every penny of their outstanding bonuses that they would have received had they been healthy enough to finish their service term."

"Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA) is thrilled that the House has passed the Veterans Guaranteed Bonus Act, H.R.3793," said Todd Bowers of the IAVA. "Ensuring that wounded service members receive their full enlistment bonuses is a critical way to recognize the enormous sacrifice they and their families have made."

The Veterans Guaranteed Bonus Act will provide essential financial security to injured servicemen and women by guaranteeing full payment of bonuses earned and owed to them. The measure will:

- Guarantee that service members who die or are discharged for disabilities will not be required to repay any portion of their bonuses;
- Mandate the Department of Defense to provide full bonuses to any service members who die or are discharged for disabilities; and,
- Require bonuses to be paid within 90 days of discharge.

In addition to the IAVA and the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Veterans Guaranteed Bonus Act is supported by 34 other military and veterans' organizations, including the Military Coalition, Fleet Reserve Association, Disabled American Veterans, the Non Commissioned Officers Association, and the Blinded Veterans Association.

